

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Memorandum on Establishing an Interagency Task Force on Federal Contracting Opportunities for Small Businesses

April 26, 2010

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Establishing an Interagency Task Force on Federal Contracting Opportunities for Small Businesses

The Federal Government is the world's largest purchaser of goods and services, with purchases totaling over \$500 billion per year. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) and other national investments are providing new opportunities for small businesses to compete for Federal contracts, and it is critical that these investments tap into the talents and skills of a broad cross-section of American business and industry. Small businesses must be able to participate in the Nation's economic recovery, including businesses owned by women, minorities, socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and service-disabled veterans of our Armed Forces. These businesses should be able to compete and participate effectively in Federal contracts.

The Congress has established a number of statutory goals designed to help small businesses compete for Federal contracts. In addition to the goal of awarding at least 23 percent of all Federal prime contracting dollars to small businesses, the Congress also established Government-wide contracting goals for participation by small businesses that are located in Historically Underutilized Business Zones (at least 3 percent) or that are owned by women (at least 5 percent), socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (at least 5 percent), and service-disabled veterans (at least 3 percent). These aspirational goals help ensure that all Americans share in the jobs and opportunities created by Federal procurement.

In recent years, the Federal Government has not consistently reached its small business contracting goals. Although we have made some progress—particularly with respect to Recovery Act contracts—more work can and should be done. I am committed to ensuring that small businesses, including firms owned by women, minorities, socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and service-disabled veterans, have fair access to Federal Government contracting. Indeed, where small businesses have the capacity to do more, we should strive to exceed the statutory goals. While Chief Acquisition Officers and Senior Procurement Executives have many priorities, small business contracting should always be a high priority in the procurement process.

Obtaining tangible results will require an honest and accurate accounting of our progress so that we can have transparency and accountability through Federal small business procurement data. Additionally, we must expand outreach strategies to alert small firms to Federal contracting opportunities.

In order to coordinate executive departments' and agencies' efforts towards ensuring that all small businesses have a fair chance to participate in Federal contracting opportunities, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established an Interagency Task Force on Federal Contracting Opportunities for Small Businesses (Task Force). The Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (Director), and the

Administrator of the Small Business Administration (Administrator) shall serve as Co-Chairs of the Task Force and shall direct its work.

Sec. 2. Membership. In addition to the Secretary, the Director, and the Administrator, the Task Force shall consist of the following members:

- (i) the Secretary of the Treasury;
- (ii) the Secretary of Defense;
- (iii) the Attorney General;
- (iv) the Secretary of Labor;
- (v) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
- (vi) the Secretary of Transportation;
- (vii) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
- (viii) the Secretary of Homeland Security;
- (ix) the Administrator of General Services;
- (x) the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;
- (xi) the Director of the Minority Business Development Agency;
- (xii) the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy;
- (xiii) the Director of the Domestic Policy Council;
- (xiv) the Director of the National Economic Council;
- (xv) the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers; and
- (xvi) the heads of such other executive departments, agencies, and offices as the President may, from time to time, designate.

A member of the Task Force may designate, to perform the Task Force functions of the member, one or more senior officials who are part of the member's department, agency, or office, and who are full-time officers or employees of the Federal Government.

Sec. 3. Functions. The Task Force shall provide to the President, not later than 120 days after the date of this memorandum, proposals and recommendations for:

- (i) using innovative strategies, such as teaming, to increase opportunities for small business contractors and utilizing and expanding mentorship programs, such as the mentor-protégé program;
- (ii) removing barriers to participation by small businesses in the Federal marketplace by unbundling large projects, improving training of Federal acquisition officials with respect to strategies for increasing small business contracting opportunities, and utilizing new technologies to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Federal program managers, acquisition officials, and the Directors of Offices of Small Business Programs and Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, their managers, and procurement center representatives in identifying and providing access to these opportunities;
- (iii) expanding outreach strategies to match small businesses, including firms located in Historically Underutilized Business Zones and firms owned and controlled by women,

minorities, socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and service-disabled veterans of our Armed Forces, with contracting and subcontracting opportunities; and

(iv) establishing policies, including revision or clarification of existing legislation, regulations, or policies, that are necessary or appropriate to effectuate the objectives of this memorandum.

Sec. 4. Using Technology to Improve Transparency and Accountability. Within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, the Assistant to the President and Chief Technology Officer and the Federal Chief Information Officer, in coordination with the Task Force, shall develop a website that illustrates the participation of small businesses, including those owned by women, minorities, socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and service-disabled veterans of our Armed Forces, in Federal contracting. To foster greater accountability and transparency in, and allow oversight of, the Federal Government's progress, this website shall be designed to encourage improved collection, verification, and availability of Federal procurement data and provide accurate data on the Federal Government's progress in ensuring that all small businesses have a fair chance to participate in Federal contracting opportunities.

Sec. 5. Outreach. In developing its recommendations, the Task Force shall conduct outreach with representatives of small businesses and small business associations.

Sec. 6. General Provisions. (a) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of any necessary appropriations.

(b) This memorandum does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

(c) The heads of executive departments and agencies shall assist and provide information to the Task Force, consistent with applicable law, as may be necessary to carry out the functions of the Task Force. Each executive department and agency shall bear its own expenses of participating in the Task Force.

(d) The Director is hereby authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

BARACK OBAMA

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NOTE: This memorandum was published in the *Federal Register* on April 29.

Categories: Communications to Federal Agencies : Interagency Task Force on Federal Contracting Opportunities for Small Businesses, memorandum on establishing.

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